

SIU Sustainability Council Project
Final Report

Project I.D. #:41209

Award date:

Completion date: May, 18 2013

Funds used (if different from award amount):

Brief write up of project/project experience (not to exceed 250 words):

The rain garden installed for this project along Thompson Woods at the College of Agricultural Sciences was the first rain garden on SIU Campus. The project demonstrates more sustainable ways to drain water from excess locations other than directing the water into municipal water plants. Excess water that runs down from Thompson Woods along with poor design of drainage that causes water to flow across a sidewalk before reaching a drain is what identified the need of installing a rain garden to capture the water. The sidewalk is located on the east end of the College of Agricultural Sciences that runs parallel with the woods. The project was in correspondence with a permeable paver project initiated by physical plant in addition with the rain garden to help alleviate excess water that comes from Thompson woods. The project was student organized and was installed by the students spring semester of 2013. The materials were locally bought from Southern Illinois and surrounding area.

Best things learned/produced from project:

The project was used to teach students the importance of understanding multiple ways of facing greenspaces. The rain garden stretches across a 250 linear ft., and the project proved to limit the amount of water wasted as runoff which leads to water municipal plants. This project not only brightens up the area with natural looking boulders and plantings but gave the water a chance to be used along the woods and recharge our natural ground water. Much of the rain is being lost as run-off and the United States may spend billions of dollars yearly in purifying the water, when the soil does a better job at no cost. The students really got a firsthand experience on the rain garden installation and had an impact in designs and construction on additional projects. The project had a beneficial impact in increasing the drainage along the side walk as well as limiting the amount forced into local drains. The project also fits in with Southern Illinois landscape and looks very natural and beneficial that can hopefully be continued around other parts of campus and surrounding communities.

How do you define sustainability?

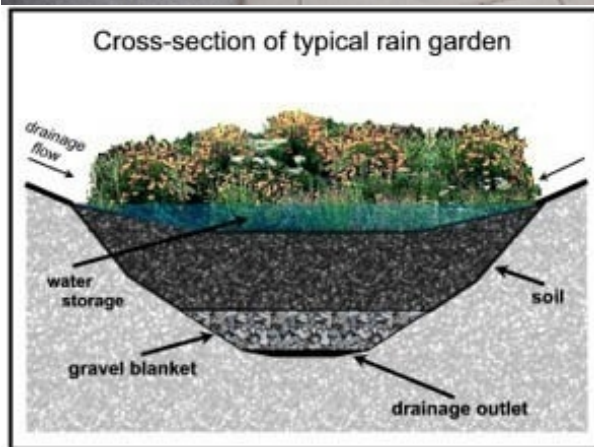
The term sustainability is a term that holds many definitions. Personally, I think it creates and maintains the way people and nature can exist in a productive atmosphere. It controls the social, environmental and economic conditions that strive the success for future generations.

What do you see as the next step for the project?

The biggest goal for any project completed at the college and SIU in general is maintaining the maintenance. Adding and completing projects are always nice but often forgotten is the general maintenance that is needed to keep the project a success. Rain gardens do require some work and maintenance that needs to be watch and managed so that the rain garden keeps its beauty and workability for years to come. Most importantly this and most of the projects created by the students at the College of Agricultural Science are used as learning and teaching tools. The students installing it and the ones to come after in the maintenance all learn vital experience to further their education which fosters sustainability.

Optional: Do you have any suggestions for the SIU Sustainability Council to improve the Green Fund award process?

Attach a minimum of five images – these will be used to promote interest in Sustainability Council projects. These can be photographs of the progress of the project, the completed project, or promotional materials.







Rain Garden in a neighborhood setting

